I. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ADOPTS THREE RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

At its substantive session of 1992 held from 29 June to 31 July in New York, the Economic and Social Council adopted the following resolutions relating to the question of Palestine.

"1992/16. Situation of and assistance to Palestinian Women

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General 1/ and the notes by the Secretary-General 2/ concerning the situation of Palestinian women living inside and outside the occupied Palestinian territory,

"Recalling the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, 3/ in particular paragraph 260 thereof,

"Recalling also its resolutions 1988/25 of 26 May 1988, 1989/34 of 24 May 1989, 1990/11 of 24 May 1990 and 1991/19 of 30 May 1991,

"Deeply alarmed by the deteriorating condition of Palestinian women and children in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, as a result of the continued Israeli violation of Palestinian human rights and oppressive measures, including collective punishments, curfews, demolition of houses, closure of schools and universities, deportation, confiscation of land and settlement activities, which are illegal, and controversies over the relevant provisions of the Geneva Convention relevant to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, 4/

1/ E/CN.6/1988/8 and Corr.1 and E/CN.6/1989/4 and Corr.1.

2/ E/CN.6/1990/10, E/CN.6/1991/9 and E/CN.6/1992/6.

3/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

4/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973.

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"1. Reaffirms that the basic improvement of the living conditions of the Palestinian women, their advancement, full equality and self-reliance, can only be achieved by an end to the Israeli occupation and the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people;

"2. Demands that Israel, the occupying power, accept the de jure applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and to respect the Convention provisions;

"3. Also demands an end to the Israeli violation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory, including an immediate halt to the Israeli settlement activities that have harmful effects on Palestinian women and their families;

"4. Calls upon governmental, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, including organizations of the United Nations system, to assist Palestinian women in the occupied Palestinian territory in developing small-scale industry and creating vocational training and legal consultation centres;

"5. Requests the Commission on the Status of Women to monitor the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, in particular paragraph 260 concerning assistance to Palestinian women;

"6. Requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in monitoring the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the mission of experts to Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic to investigate the condition of Palestinian women and children 5/ in order to improve the condition of women and children;

"7. Also requests the Secretary-General to review the situation of Palestinian women and children in the occupied Palestinian territory and in the refugee camps, and to submit a report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session, using all available sources."

40th plenary meeting
30 July 1992

5/ E/CN.6/1990/10, annex I.

"1992/57. **Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli settlements on the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, occupied since 1967, and on the Arab population of the Syrian Golan**

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Recalling General Assembly resolution 46/199 of 20 December 1991,

"Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

"Recalling also Security Council resolution 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and other resolutions affirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949 1/ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

"Expressing its concern at the establishment by Israel, the occupying Power, of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including the settlements of new immigrants therein,

"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General; 2/

"2. Deplores the establishment of settlements by Israel in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the other Arab territories occupied since 1967, and regards the settlements as unlawful and without any legal basis;

1/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973.

2/ A/47/294-E/1992/84.

"3. Recognizes the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli settlements on the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, occupied by Israel since 1967, and on the Arab population of the Syrian Golan;

"4. Strongly deplores Israel's practices in the occupied Palestinian territory and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, in particular its confiscation of land, its appropriation of water resources, its depletion of other economic resources and its displacement and deportation of the population of those territories;

"5. Reaffirms the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the population of the Syrian Golan to their natural and all other economic resources, and regards any infringement thereof as being without any legal validity;

"6. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution."

42nd plenary meeting
31 July 1992

"1992/58. Assistance to the Palestinian people

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 46/201 of 20 December 1991,

"Taking into account the intifadah of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory against the Israeli occupation, including Israeli economic and social policies and practices,

"Rejecting Israeli restrictions on external economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory,

"Concerned about the economic losses of the Palestinian people as a result of the Gulf crisis,

"Aware of the increasing need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

"Affirming that the Palestinian people cannot develop their national economy as long as the Israeli occupation persists,

"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General; 1/

"2. Expresses its appreciation to the States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided assistance to the Palestinian people;

"3. Requests the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, taking into account the economic losses of the Palestinian people as a result of the Gulf crisis;

"4. Calls for treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry;

"5. Also calls for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin;

"6. Further calls for the immediate lifting of Israeli restrictions and obstacles hindering the implementation of assistance projects by the United Nations Development Programme, other United Nations bodies and others providing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;

1/ A/47/212-E/1992/54.

"7. Reiterates its call for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects mentioned in its resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984;

"8. Calls for facilitation of the establishment of Palestinian development banks in the occupied Palestinian territory, with a view to promoting investment, production, employment and income therein;

"9. Recognizes the need for convening a seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, and, in this regard, suggests to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people to consider, in its programme for 1992-1993, convening such a seminar;

"10. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution."

42nd plenary meeting
31 July 1992

II. EXCERPT FROM JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH-EAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN), HELD AT MANILA ON 21 AND 22 JULY 1992

"The Foreign Ministers reiterated their support for the continuation of the Middle East peace process under the auspices of the United Nations to address the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and other relevant resolutions. On the situation in Lebanon, the Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their support for the full implementation of the 1989 Taif Agreement and Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

"The Foreign Ministers welcomed the initiative taken by the United States of American and the Russian Federation in co-sponsoring a regional peace conference for direct negotiations on the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict, which constitute the main source of instability and tension in the region." (see A/47/351, paras. 26 and 27).

III. SEVENTH UNITED NATIONS EUROPEAN SEMINAR ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE IS HELD IN MALTA FROM 27 TO 29 JULY 1992

The Seventh United Nations European Regional Seminar on the Question of Palestine was held in Malta from 27 to 29 July 1992, in accordance with the terms of General Assembly resolution 46/74 B of 11 December 1991.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by a delegation comprising: H.E. Mr. Kéba Birane Cissé (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee and head of delegation; H.E. Mr. Victor Camilleri (Malta) and H.E. Mr. Victor Batiouk (Ukraine), Vice-Chairmen of the Seminar, and Dr. Nasser Al-Kidwa, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations.

A total of six meetings were held and 15 panelists presented papers on selected aspects of the question of Palestine.

Representatives of 10 Governments, Palestine, 1 United Nations organ, 1 United Nations specialized agency, 1 intergovernmental organization, as well as 9 non-governmental organizations (NGOS), as observers, attended the Seminar.

The event was opened by Prof. Guido de Marco, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malta. At the opening meeting, statements were also made by Mr. Cissé and Mr. Abdulatif Abu Hejla, Director-General of the Political Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), who read out a message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO.

Following the opening ceremony, Mr. Joseph Hazbun, of the World Health Organization, and Monsignor Hilarion Capucci, Archbishop of the Melkite Catholic Church of Jerusalem, addressed the Seminar. A message from Mr. Hamid Algabid, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, was read out.

Two round tables that were established and their panelists were as follows:

I. "International action to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory":

(a) Measures that could be taken by the High Contracting Parties to ensure respect for the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Mr. Victor Nagaychuk (Ukraine), Head of Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

(b) Action by the international community and NGOs.

Mr. Pol Marck (Belgium), Member of the European Parliament, and Mr. Bernard Mills (United Kingdom), Chairman, European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the question of Palestine.

(c) Measures to alleviate the suffering and to promote the independent economic development of the occupied Palestinian territory: the role of Europe.

H.E. Mr. Gunter Weiss, Ambassador and Representative of the Commission of the European Communities to Malta.

(d) Presentation on the panel as a whole.

Monsignor Hilarion Capucci (Palestinian), Archbishop of the Melkite Catholic Church of Jerusalem; Mrs. Amina Hass (Israel), journalist.

II. "Efforts to promote the implementation of United Nations resolutions on the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East":

(a) The current peace process.

Mrs. Helena Cobban (United States of America), Research Director of the initiative for peace and cooperation in the Middle East, columnist, Mr. V.Y. Gogitidze (Russian Federation), Chief of Section, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

(b) The role of the United Nations.

H.E. Mr. Evarist V. Saliba (Malta), Ambassador, Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs

(c) The role of Europe.

Mr. Patrick Cooney (Ireland), Member of European Parliament and former Defence Minister, Mr. Richard Balfe (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Member of European Parliament, and Mr. Jean-Michel Dumont (Belgium), Secretary-General, Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Cooperation.

(d) The problems posed by Israel's settlement policy and Jewish immigration.

Mr. Hanna Ibrahim (Israel), Spokesman of the Arab Democratic Party, Editor.

(e) Presentation on the panel as a whole.

Mr. Abdulatif Abu Hejla, Director-General of the Political Department, Palestine Liberation Organization, Mr. Gadi Yatsiv (Israel), Former Knesset Member.

The expert members of the panels agreed on summaries of the presentations and the discussion of the two topics. The full text of the proceedings will be published in due course as a publication of the United Nations Division for Palestinian Rights.

For its part, the Seminar adopted a motion of thanks to the Government and people of Malta.

Closing statements were made by Mr. Carmel Aquilina, Acting Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta, Mr. Abdulatif Abu Hejla, Director-General of the Political Department of the PLO, and Mr. Kéba Birane Cissé.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The participants of the Seventh United Nations European Seminar on the Question of Palestine welcomed the convening of the Seminar as an important contribution to continuing efforts to bring about a just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East. They emphasized that the European countries had played, and could continue to play, a constructive and active role towards that objective. They particularly welcomed the holding of the meeting in Malta, whose steadfast and consistent support for the Palestinian national struggle and whose geographical location and active involvement in Mediterranean and European affairs made it an ideal venue for deliberations on how Europe could further contribute to the ongoing peace efforts.

2. The participants noted that the fundamental changes in the international political scene, the shift from confrontation towards cooperation in international affairs, had brought the possibility of meaningful interaction of the international community in the search for efficient ways of resolving the Middle East conflict. They stressed that those opportunities should not be missed owing to lack of goodwill or inaction and warned of the persistent dangers of continued instability and of the resulting unabated arms race in the region, which threatened not only the peoples of the Middle East but also neighbouring Europe.

3. The participants reiterated that there was a European as well as international consensus concerning the essential elements of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine, which include: withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Palestinian territory occupied since June 1967, including Jerusalem, and other occupied Arab territories; respect for the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized boundaries; and the recognition and exercise of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination, in accordance with the pertinent resolutions of the United Nations.

4. The participants, noting that the Peace Conference on the Middle East convened at Madrid on 30 October 1991 was entering into a particularly significant stage, expressed their earnest hope that the talks soon to be resumed would be serious and productive and would be crucial for establishing a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region. They noted in that connection that the process had the support of the parties concerned and had as its basis Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which had long been recognized as the cornerstone of a comprehensive settlement. The participants stressed the essential need for an active role by the United Nations, the Security Council and the Secretary-General for a successful outcome of the peace process. They were of the opinion that a more active European contribution to the peace conference on the Middle East was welcomed.

5. The participants considered that, in the recent elections, a majority of the Israeli public had voted for peace and had expressed the earnest hope that the new Israeli Government would institute radical changes in Israel's policies in favour of peace. The participants called upon the new Israeli Government to declare its agreement with the principle of "land for peace", to comply with the United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and to acknowledge the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. They also called upon the Government to take immediate measures for the restoration of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of Palestinians living in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, in accordance with Israel's obligations under international law.

6. The participants stressed that while the peace process was taking place, it was of the utmost importance to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian people living under occupation; and that measures in that regard would help to create an environment more conducive to peace and coexistence between Israeli and Palestinian people. In particular, they called for the immediate cessation of all settlement activity, land and water confiscation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, which posed a threat to the very existence of the Palestinian community and which were in clear violation of article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and were detrimental to the peace process under way.

7. The participants recognized that the intifadah was an expression of the national will of the Palestinian people for liberation, of its resistance to the occupation and of its determination to remain on its land and to attain its inalienable national rights. They reaffirmed the right of the Palestinian

people to self-determination and national independence. They also reaffirmed that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. They welcomed free democratic elections in the Palestinian occupied territories under effective international supervision. They voiced deep concern that the military occupation had now lasted for over 25 years and that Israel had continued to reject the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied territory and to violate its provisions. They called for appropriate measures to be taken to implement Security Council resolutions 672 (1990) and 681 (1990), which asked for action by the High Contracting Parties and by the Secretary-General to ensure observance of the Convention. The participants considered that the fact that a peace process was under way did not detract in any way from Israel's obligations to respect the Fourth Geneva Convention and to abide by the relevant Security Council resolutions. They called upon the High Contracting Parties to the Convention, the Security Council and the United Nations system as a whole to take all necessary measures to ensure that Israel abide by its obligations as the occupying Power.

8. The participants noted in that connection that the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People had given priority to the promotion of measures for the protection of the Palestinian people living under Israeli occupation. The participants also recalled that the European Community had taken measures which had been successful in ensuring the reopening of Palestinian schools and the export of Palestinian agricultural commodities, and called upon the Community and European NGOs to continue to devise means of applying pressure on Israel in order to restore respect for Palestinian human rights, including tying all agreements to human rights considerations. They also called upon the Community and European NGOs to insist that Israel abide by its duty to ensure fair and equal treatment for Palestinian workers. They urged the Israeli Government to terminate all military and administrative obstacles obstructing the employment of Palestinians as well as their efforts to develop an independent economy of their own.

9. The participants further recommended that the European and international NGO communities continue and intensify their activities to ensure protection, such as public education, health and information, campaigns on specific issues, visiting missions to the occupied territory and others. They called upon NGOs to continue to press upon their respective Governments their duty to secure the compliance of the Israeli Government with the provision of the Convention. They recommended that NGOs present in the occupied territory as witnesses to the behaviour of the occupying Power should report infringements to their embassies

and consulates-general, thus drawing their Government's attention to the situation in a very real way. Participants also recommended that European NGOs should seek to support, strengthen and coordinate the work of NGOs to promote the independent development of the occupied territory.

10. The participants expressed their appreciation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for their constant efforts in promoting a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Palestine question. They expressed confidence that the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights would adapt their programme to meet the current situation and to continue to increase their activities to promote a constructive debate and a concrete and action-oriented analysis of the most important issues relating to the question of Palestine.

11. The participants expressed their warm appreciation to the Government and the people of Malta for providing a venue for the European Seminar on the Question of Palestine and for the excellent facilities, courtesies and generous hospitality extended to them.

IV. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION

During the course of July, the following information was received by the Division for Palestinian Rights:

1. News from Within, independent newsletter, available from: Alternative Information Centre, P.O. Box 24278, Jerusalem.

2. AJME News, journal of Americans for Justice in the Middle East, available from: P.O. Box 113-5581, Beirut, Lebanon.

3. The Other Front, available from: the Alternative Information Centre, P.O. Box 24278, Jerusalem.

4. Targeting to Kill: Israeli Undercover Units, publication of Palestine Human Rights Information Center. Available from: PHRIC International, 4753 N. Broadway, Suite 930, Chicago, IL 60640, United States of America.

5. Middle East Labor Bulletin, official publication of the Labor Committee on the Middle East, available from: P.O. Box 421546, San Francisco, CA 94142-1546, United States of America.

6. Israel and Palestine Political Report, available from: Magelan, Boite Postale 130, 75463 Paris CEDEX 10, France.

7. Middle East International, biweekly publication, available from: P.O. Box 5336, Temple Heights Station, Washington, D.C. 20009, United States of America.

8. NECEF Report, publication of the Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada. Available from: 106 Duplex Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5P 2A7.

9. Palestine Solidarité, bimonthly bulletin of l'Association Medicale Franco-Palestinienne. Available from: 14, rue de Nanteuil, 75015 Paris, France.

10. Oriente Medio, publication of the Asociación "Amigos de Palestina". Available from Apdo. No. 2102, 37080 Salamanca, Spain.

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